

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-04

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

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FOR ASST SECY SISCO

FOLLOWING IS REPEAT BELGRADE 1601 DATED 14 APR 73 SENT ACTION
SECSTATE BEIRUT KHARTOUM TEL AVIV USUN NY ZAGREB

QUOTE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BELGRADE 1601

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINS, XH XF LE US YO

SUBJECT: TANJUG BEIRUT ARTICLE

REF: STATE 070061

1. CHARGE CALLED ON KREACIC OF FOREIGN SECRETARIAT APRIL 14 AND
OBJECTED IN STRONGEST TERMS TO SCURRILOUS TANJUG REPORT ON MOORE
CONNECTIONS WITH CIA AND CIA INVOLVEMENT IN BEIRUT RAID.

2. QUESTIONING REASON FOR STRONG US REACTION, KREACIC REPLIED
ALONG FAIRLY STANDARD YUGOSLAV LINES. HE CLAIMED (1) AUTHOR OF
ARTICLE IN QUESTION WAS MERELY REPORTING BELIEFS CURRENT IN BEIRUT,
(2) ARTICLE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION, (3)
FOREIGN SECRETARIAT STATEMENT MADE NO MENTION OF US ROLE AND
PRESS HERE HAS CARRIED US DENIAL SEVERAL TIME, (4) GOY PATIENTLY
PUTS UP WITH FAR WORSE IN US PRESS (INCITEMENTS TO VIOLENCE
AGAINST YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS), (5) WE CANNOT ALLOW COMPLAINTS AGAINST
OUR RESPECTIVE PRESSES TO DOMINATE OUR RELATIONSHIPS.

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CHARGE REPLIED THAT TANJUG, LIKE OTHER YUGOSLAV ORGANS, HAS VERY CLOSE LINKS WITH GOVERNMENT AND/ OR PARTY AND HENCE SUCH IRRESPONSIBLE FALSEHOODS CAN HAVE POISONING EFFECTS ON ATMOSPHERE IN OUR RELATIONS ESPECIALLY IN FACE FIRM AND REPEATED US DENIAL. HE NOTED IN ADDITION THAT YUGOSLAV PRESS HAS BEEN GIVING FAR MORE PROMINENCE TO BIG LIE ITSELF THAN TO US DENIAL, AND THAT AUTHOR OF TANJUG ARTICLE HAD NOT EVEN BOTHERED TO ATTRIBUTE TO ARABS THE BELIEFS WHICH HE REPORTED. AS MEETING CONCLUDED, KREACIC ASSURED US THAT GOY BELIEVES ACCURATE PRESS REPORTING BY BOTH SIDES CAN CONTRIBUTE IMPORTANTLY TO GOOD ATMOSPHERE IN OUR RELATIONS, AND " WILL ACT IN THAT SPIRIT." CHARGE LEFT TEXT OF SCALI APRIL 13 STATEMENT WITH KREACIC. EMBASSY HAS ALSO FURNISHED IT TO TANJUG. WE PLAN TO CONVEY TO TANJUG ON MONDAY STRONG US OBJECTION TO AKSENTIJEVIC ARTICLE. IF LOCAL PRESS INQUIRES, WE PROPOSE TO SAY SIMPLY THAT US HAS PROTESTED TANJUG PIECE IN BOTH WASHINGTON AND BELGRADE.

COMMENT: KREACIC SEEMED SURPRISED AT STRENGTH OF US REACTION AS PORTRAYED HERE AND IN WASHINGTON. HOPEFULLY HE WILL REFLECT OUR STRONG CONCERN IN DISCUSSING QUESTION WITH OTHERS IN YUGOSLAV HIERARCHY, INCLUDING MEDIA.
JOHNSON

UNQUOTE. ROGERS

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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